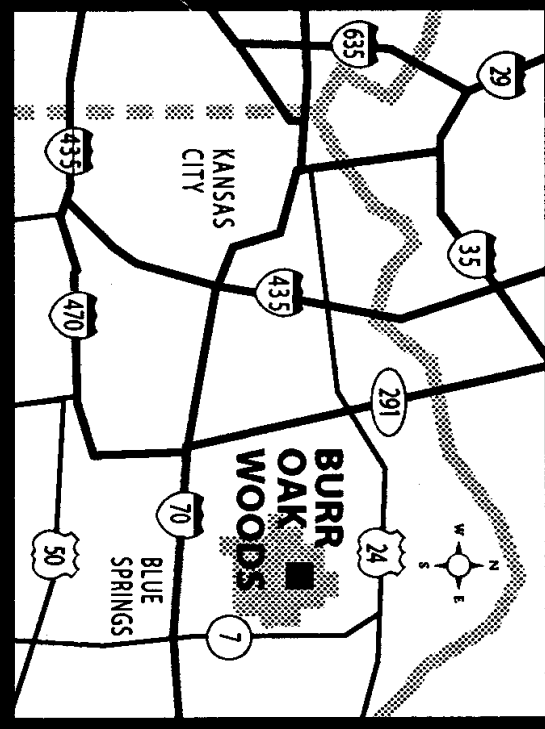


LEARN MORE ABOUT BURR OAK WOODS BY VISITING OUR WEBSITE AT:
WWW.BURROAKWOODS.ORG



Burr Oak Woods Conservation Nature Center is located one mile north of I-70 on Hwy 7, one mile west on Park Road. The Nature Center is open Monday through Saturday 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM and noon to 5 PM on Sundays. **Area Hours: 8 AM to 5 PM.** No pets allowed. There is no admission fee. **Phone: 816-228-3766**

Burr Oak Woods

Conservation Nature Center

1401 NW Park Road
Blue Springs, Missouri 64015
Phone: 816-228-3766 TDD: 816-655-6268
Fax: 816-655-6267

**NATURE CENTER
MANAGER**
Lynn Youngblood

Stephanie Acers
Lisa LaCombe
Diane Neal

NATURALISTS

Carol Barclay
Sheri Medlock
Shalena View

**ASSISTANT
NATURE CENTER
MANAGER**
R. Craig Hensley

CLERICAL

Lauren McCarthy, *Office Supervisor*
Joan Blackmon
Joe Polka

MAINTENANCE
Wayne Bass, *Lead*

David Bilyeu
Ed Miller

Rachael Butler

NEWSLETTER

Editions

Lynn Youngblood
R. Craig Hensley

Layout

Joan Blackmon

The Nutshell

Burr Oak Woods Conservation Nature Center
Missouri Department of Conservation
1401 NW Park Road - Blue Springs, MO 64015



PRSR.T.STD.
US POSTAGE PAID
JEFFERSON CITY MO
PERMIT 274



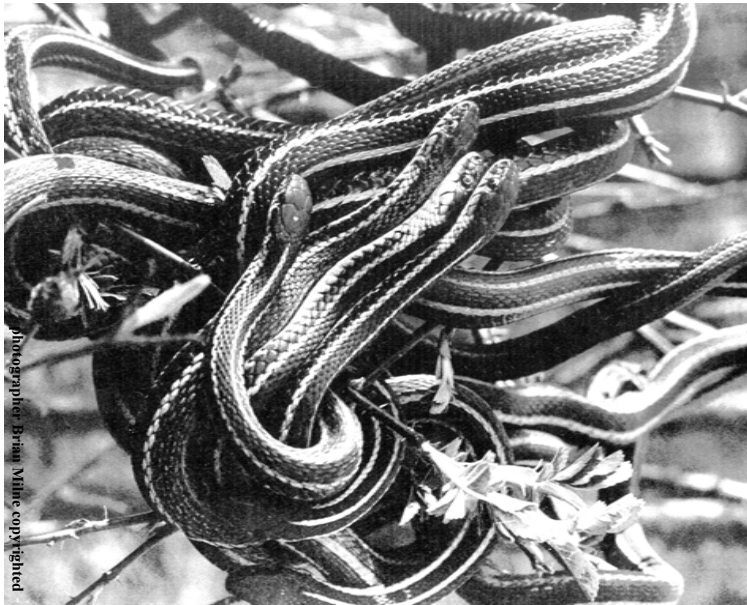
The Nutshell

Burr Oak Woods Conservation Nature Center
Volume 19 February 2005 Number 02

A Gathering of Snakes

If you see a snake with three stripes, there's a good chance that it is a garter snake. The garter snake is one of the Missouri snakes that become dormant during winter, disappearing by November and re-emerging February or March. Garter snakes normally overwinter underground in dens, in or under surface covers.

As winter approaches temperature drop, garter snakes begin to group together by the hundreds. This aggregation or grouping of snakes helps reduce the loss of body heat, bringing the males and females together, and accelerates mating in the spring when the snakes emerge. Female garter snakes must remain dormant for at least five months to succeed in reproduction.



Photographic Brian Milne copyrighted

When the snakes emerge, there's a mating frenzy where as many as 30 male garter snakes will be in competition to get the female. These males will hook their bodies around the female, forming a "snake ball", a unique mating behavior. Garter snakes are polygamous, meaning that males will mate with more than one female. Garter snakes are one of the few snake species that migrate great lengths (ten miles) to reach the dens.

Garter snakes can be found in any type of habitats associated with water. Their diet includes earthworms, frogs, toads, salamanders, and fish. Other species rarely eaten are slugs, leeches, small mammals, birds, insects, spiders, and other small snakes. Keep your eyes open for these fascinating snakes this spring. *-Sheri Medlock*

Frozen Fish Section

Have you ever stood beside a lake or stream during the winter, dreaming of warmer days? Cold, north winds steal your breath away. Shivering, you contemplate the molasses thick, black water. What happens to the animals that live beneath the surface during the winter months? As water temperature begins to plunge, all life must be prepared to wait out the long cold winter at approximately 4 degrees Celsius (39.2 degrees Fahrenheit). Fish metabolic rate slows. Less food is required, which perpetuates survival, but also means that a much greater effort is required to convert food into usable energy. Therefore, energy conservation becomes imperative. Within the water, fish can be found near groundwater springs, where water temperature is slightly warmer. They will stay in stream pools with little current. Here, they will lose less energy than they would if they were

fighting a stronger current. Many will die, especially first year fish. It appears that bigger is better in the fish world! Fish are cold blooded animals. Body temperature is regulated outside of their body by the environment in which they live. During the summer months, fish move quickly and effortlessly through the warm water. As temperatures near freezing, bass, sunfish, and catfish search for a place to hibernate. They swim to pond and stream edges and bury themselves in organic materials such as mud or leaves. Their breathing and the heart rate slows dramatically. It is here they will wait out the winter.

Some, like the bullhead catfish, can become completely frozen! Here they will remain until warm March winds, and gentle April showers begin the thawing process. When the water becomes warm enough they will begin to swim again. Ahhh...the fantastic wonders natural world! *-Lisa LaCombe*

Helping Missourians connect with nature and conserve it, too!

February Program

Program Registration

Please call 816-228-3766 (TDD 816-655-6268) on or after the first of the month to register for the FREE programs listed on this page. It is important to arrive five minutes before the program time. If you have to cancel, please call as soon as possible so someone on the waiting list can attend.

13 Sunday

Viewers Choice:

Nature Movies!

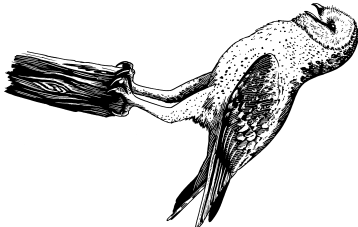
Stop by and unwind with an exciting and educational movie! We have many nature movies in our library raging from preschool to adult oriented. Movies are shown on a first come, first play basis. No registration required. All ages / noon - 4:00 p.m.

15 Tuesday

Conservation Kid's Club:

Owl Moon

The outdoors will become our classroom as we discover the mysterious world of owls! We will rotate through three fun-filled, educational stations including a campfire, hayride, and owl pellet dissection. Don't miss it! Registration required. 7-10 yr / 6:30 - 8:00 p.m.



16 Wednesday

Little Acorns: Play'n 'Possum

The opossum has something that no other animal has in North America. Do you know what it is? Come find out what makes this creature unique, and make an opossum friend to take home with you! We will even embark on a game of "play'n 'possum". Who will be our champion? Please Call to Register. 3-5 yr / 10:00 – 11:15 a.m.

19 Saturday

Deaf and Hard of Hearing: This "Bud's" for You

Trees with leaves are easy to identify, but how can you tell one tree from another in winter? Buds and twigs give us a clue! We will find out how to use a key to tell an oak from a hickory and more! Please call to register. 5 yr & up / 1:30 – 3:00 p.m.

25 Friday

Deaf and Hard of Hearing: Build a Bluebird House

Bring a hammer and we will provide the rest of the materials to build a bluebird box to take home. We will show a short closed captioned bluebird film. Please call to register. 5 yr & up / 6:00 – 7:30 p.m.

26 Sunday

Missouri Conservation Frontiers: Bird Identification

Come out and learn to identify some of the winter birds of Missouri. We will go on a hike in search of our feathered friends and make bird feeders so you can watch them in your own backyard! Dress for the weather. Please call to register. All ages / 8:30-10:00 a.m.

26 Saturday

Bird in the Hand

Join us for an up-close look at the songbirds that visit the birdfeeding station at Burr Oak Woods. We'll be capturing, identifying, banding and releasing songbirds, from juncos and chickadees to downy woodpeckers and goldfinches. And, thanks to the generous support of Antoine Seed Co., the birds won't be the only ones feasting at the feeders. Antoine's will provide donuts, muffins and juice for early birds, the human kind that is. No registration is required for this hands-on, educational program. Families (children 3 yr and up) / 9:00 a.m. - Noon

26 Sunday

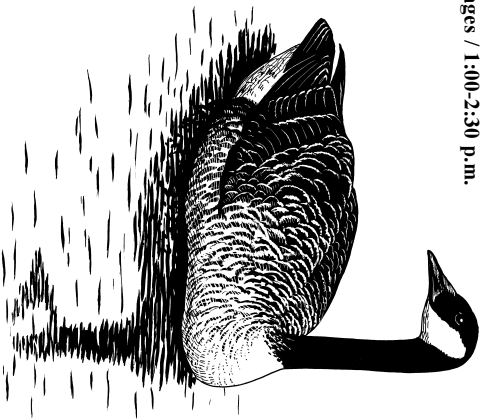
Nature Nuts: Who Goes There?

Join us for a look at and for winter wildlife. We will go for a hike, so be sure to dress your child for being outdoors in January, including boots. Please call to register. 8-10 yr / 2:00 - 3:30 p.m.

27 Sunday

Winter Walk

Do you feel like you are sleeping the winter away? Grab your coat and hat and get out of the house! Join us for a crisp winter walk down the Habitat Trail. Dress for the weather. Please call to register. All ages / 1:00-2:30 p.m.



February

Featured Program

5 Saturday

Adults Only:

NatureScaping Workshop

Let visions of spring flowers wash away those winter blues. At this workshop we will give you some great ideas on how to add native flair to your gardens this spring. Each attendee will also leave with

a set of Grow Native Easycapes seed packets! This is an adults only program. Please call to register. Adults Only (18 yr and up) / 9:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
Program Agenda:
9:00-9:30 Opening-Grow Native!
Stephanie Acers
9:30-10:30 Landscaping with Trees
Chuck Connor
10:45-11:45 Native Perennials
Leah Berg
11:45-12:45 Lunch break (on your own)
1:00-2:00 Native Plants for Wet Places
Jan Vineyard
2:15-3:15 Landscape Design
Pete Loughlin
3:15-3:30 Closing Remarks

Upcoming 2005

Events and Programs to watch and plan for

April 2nd and 3rd

Youth Managed Turkey Hunt

Ages 11-15 yr

April 16th

Spring in the Forest

All Ages

April 24th

Passport to Adventure at Union Station

All Ages

May 14th

International Migratory Bird Day

All Ages

June 3rd

Music in the Woods

All Ages

July 8th

Friday Night Live: Firefly Frenzie

All Ages

August 20th

Vulture Venture

All Ages

September 2nd

Music in the Woods

All Ages

September 10th

Women inthe Outdoors (with NWTf)

Adults Only (18 yr and up)

September 24th

Monarch Mania

All Ages

October 14th

Friday Night Live: Owls

All Ages

November 12th

Persimmon Festival

All Ages

February Programs at

Lake City Range

816-229-4448

28900 E Argo Road

Grain Valley, Mo 64029

We are pleased to let people know about several of the programs offered by the Missouri Department of Conservation's Lake City Range. Be sure to call 816-229-4448 to register for these special programs.

Beginners Scrimshaw

Saturday the 5th; 1:00 – 5:00 p.m.

This class is designed to get you started in teaching the basic of scrimshaw.

Course will cover the types of tools used in scrimshaw, materials, simple designs and more. Class is limited to eight adults. Registration is required, call 816/229-4448.

Shed Hunting

Sunday the 6th; 1:00 – 5:00 p.m.

A great pass time activity that can be done after deer season. It is an excellent way to learn more about your hunting areas, and a great way to get some winter exercise. Learn more about the deer you hunt. Registration is required, call 816/229-4448.

Fly Tying

Tuesday the 8th; 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

Missouri Trout Fisherman Association will teach the basics of creating and tying flies in three sessions. You must attend all sessions and materials are provided. Registration is required, call 816/229-4448.

Basic Woodcarving

Saturday the 19th; 1:00 – 5:00 p.m.

Basic wood carving is an art that is relaxing, artistic, and allows for self expression. From this basic session you will be able to move into more elaborate carvings that will astound your friends with your new talents. This is a two session class. Registration is required, call 816/229-4448.

Nature Shop

Featured Product for January

"In Focus" by Jim

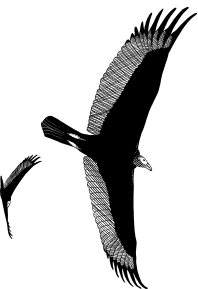


Regular Price \$18.00

Featured Price \$14.40

Heritage Card Discount Does Not Apply

- Natural Happenings -

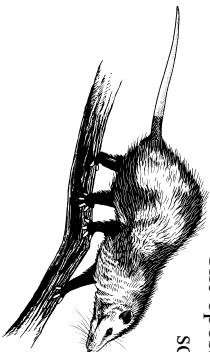


- February 2nd is GROUNDHOG DAY! If he sees his shadow, six more weeks of winter! Let's hope it's a cloudy day!
- Keep an eye to the sky. Turkey vultures begin to return to Missouri.
- Opossum young are born toward the end of this month and climb into their mother's pouch. They will stay in the pouch until May.
- Love is in the air! Many animals breed this month including coyotes, and skunks.

For more information call us at 816-228-3766 or visit our web site at burroakwoods.org

Little Acorns: Play'n 'Possum

The opossum has something that no other animal has in North America. Do you know what it is? Come find out what makes this creature unique, and make an opossum friend to take home with you! We will even embark on a game of "play'n 'possum". Who will be our champion? Please Call to Register. 3-5 yr / 10:00 – 11:15 a.m.



12 Saturday

Critter Corner: Groundhog

Is winter going to be with us for six more weeks or not? We'll let the groundhog tell us that and more as e learn about this mystical mammall Please dress your child for February weather and call to register. 5-7 yr / 2:00 - 3:30 p.m.